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REVIEWS.

Die Syntax in den Werken Alfreds des Grossen. Von Dr. J. Ernst Wülfing. Zweiten Teiles erste Hälfte. P. Hanstein : Bonn, 1897. Pp. xiv, 250.

IN 1894 there issued from the press of Hanstein at Bonn the first part of Dr. J. E. Wülfing's *Syntax in the Works of Alfred*, a work which promised, in spite of certain grave shortcomings, to be the most important contribution yet made to a knowledge of the modes of expression in the earliest stage of our language. The present instalment, devoted to verb-syntax, follows closely the plan, and has all the excellences, of the first part ; of the defects there noted, some have been in a measure corrected, while others, which seem to have their root in the author's temperament, are still present in as irritating a form as ever.

The scope of the work has increased as it has progressed. The latter half of this second part will treat of adverbs, prepositions, and conjunctions, thus completing the syntax of the parts of speech, while a third volume will be required for the discussion of the syntax of the sentence.

In his preface, Dr. Wülfing pays his respects to his various critics, defending his methods against their strictures. He has, however, yielded to their suggestions, and materially added to the value of his work by introducing frequent examples of the phenomena under discussion from non-Alfredian prose texts ; the territory thus annexed includes the Laws of Æðelbirht, Hloðhære, Ine, and Wihtræd, the Blickling Homilies, those of Wulfstan, the Gospel of Luke, the Legends of the Holy Rood, Ælfric's Homilies, the Chronicle, and the Northumbrian Matthew, the citations from the last three being confined almost exclusively to the selections in Kluge's *Lesebuch*. One is a little surprised that a scholar of Wülfing's thoroughness — a trait of which new evidence is given by the four pages of Errata and Addenda, mostly to Vol. I., which are prefixed to the volume in hand — should

be satisfied with 'choice selections' made for purposes quite other than syntactical.

The mechanical excellences of the book are the same which were so commendable in Part I. The table of contents, the system of cross-references — giving not only section, but page — the variety in the types, and all the modes devised for making the matter easy of reference, leave little to be desired in this direction. Summary lists, such as were so helpful at the close of Part I., are promised for the end of the second half of Part II.

But from one who has so just an appreciation of the value of form in a work of this sort, it is a surprise to discover such inconsistencies in arrangement as present themselves throughout the book. To cite a few: In the treatment of reflexive verbs (pp. 2-18), a section is devoted to each construction, and, within each section, the verbs are arranged alphabetically; this seems the obvious and ideal arrangement. In the portion of the book (pp. 73-233) in which subordinate clauses, infinitives, and participles are discussed, the verbs on which these various adjuncts depend are arranged in no discoverable order; the supposition is that a 'subjective' order, fitted to his view of the requirements of each construction, exists in the author's brain; but, except for an occasional statement to the effect that he follows some other grammarian's classification, the reader is left without a clue. The verbal substantives, beginning on p. 233, are placed in alphabetical order; a section each is given to those in *-ing* and *-eng*, while those in *-ung* are divided into nineteen sections, some of them containing but a single example, corresponding to the initial letters of the words which they contain. If only the *Uebersichtlichkeit* might be spread out a little more, and not thus congested where it is least needed!

Again, in his treatment of dependent clauses, he ordinarily makes no distinction among the introducing conjunctions. These are tumbled in a heap at the head of the section; and if you wish to discover how they differ in application, you may search for yourself in the mess of examples which follow. Thus, we have, as introducing temporal clauses denoting 'the point of time at which a thing takes place': '*ðā, ða ða, ðonne, ðonne ðonne*, time-word+*ðe, ðe* (? *Or.* 2, 6), *mid ðy ðe* (*Be.* 548, 43), *mid ðam ðe* (*Bo.* 6, 24), *ðær, ðær ðær, þonecan þe* (*Bo.* 146, 22; 100, 13; 138, 18), *þonne ær þe* (? *Bo.* 116, 1), *swa oft swa, swa hwanne swa* (*Cp.* 389, 35),' an interesting and varied collection surely, but presented without

comment, and affording, in the section which follows, no means of viewing at once all the examples of the use of a given conjunction, except in the case of the rarer ones, the occurrences of which are designated in parenthesis after the conjunction in the list, as above. But, on turning to p. 127, we see with joy that Wülfing has arranged his conditional clauses under the introductory conjunctions; even here, however, he fails us at the end, where (§ 457, p. 146) he gives a half-page of unassorted conditions with 'andere Fügewörter,' some of them very unusual, with no other comment (aside from an interrogation) save that afforded by the Latin original, which he usually, as in all doubtful cases where possible, subjoins in parenthesis.

It is, however, only just to Dr. Wülfing to give him the benefit of the conjecture that much which he has failed to give us here will be supplied in the sections on the conjunctions and on the syntax of the sentence.

In his preface, the author defends himself against Holthausen's and Kellner's charge that he does not sufficiently emphasize what is characteristic in Alfred's syntax, by saying that his book is not a treatise on the peculiarities of Alfred's syntax, but an account of Old English syntax, as it exists in the works of Alfred. If this is the case, why does he mention, as at the top of p. 38, phenomena which are not found in Alfred, and may only possibly ('wohl') exist elsewhere? If he is giving merely the unrelated syntax of Alfred, why contrast the rarity of a construction, as *þ*, top of p. 194, with its frequency in the poetry? At the end of a section, as pp. 32, 140, 145, 175, 197, he frequently presents collections of 'Einzelheiten,' in which, if anywhere, the flavor of Alfredian syntax is to be found. In some cases these are discussed, often with great good sense; as often they are merely named, or (as pp. 140 and 175) left in an indiscriminate pile for who will to rake over and label.

This reticence in matters of theory is, after all, the vital point of Wülfing's method, by which he must be approved or condemned. As a storehouse of materials his work is of great value; here he is on his chosen ground, and a more careful or trustworthy collector of phenomena we could not desire; but as a reasoned account of Old English syntax, or even of that syntax as exemplified in Alfred's writings, his book is a disappointment. Wülfing makes many an illuminative comment on single passages, he proposes occasional emendations and corrects mistranslations, and he gives the Latin originals of his passages, to justify his classification; but that classi-

fication, as in the cases mentioned just above, is still rough, and, worst of all, there is practically no attempt to explain, or even to suggest by arrangement, the probable development of a construction or series of constructions, or the true nature of idiomatic expressions; or to account for the employment of a word or construction for purposes apparently far removed from those native to it. Sporadic outbursts of explanation there are, as the comment on the various subjunctives in §§ 437, 439, and 441; but just as the reader is congratulating himself on Wülfig's change of heart, he looks across the page and finds § 443, much longer than any one of the others, and quite parallel in scope, with not a single comment vouchsafed. From these facts only one conclusion can be drawn: the ground must all be worked over anew by some one who will use this material, like that presented by the unnumbered makers of little dissertations, merely as data for a philosophical treatment of the subject. Dr. Wülfig has missed a rare opportunity; his labor has not indeed been in vain, for he has spread before us a large mass of material; but with so much material in hand, supplemented by such other matter as he occasionally introduces in the section of his work before us, he might, with little more pains, have made a book which would have taken its place for many years to come as a serviceable, even if not ultimate, handbook of Old English syntax.

At the foot of p. 101, he quotes from Dietrich, apropos of the use of an imperative for the subjunctive: 'The simple mention of a so-called variation from the norm would furnish no scientific justification for the change.' Wülfig apparently endorses this sound statement; yet I fear that the present work, judged by this self-accepted standard, would often be found sadly lacking. It is this failure to do more than 'simply mention' phenomena which gives the book the air of presenting nothing new. The large amount of fresh material is lost sight of, in the absence of fresh theory to keep pace with it.

In the present volume, beside Mätzner, whom he follows in his classification of infinitives, Wülfig owes much to the excellent dissertations of Blackburn, Fleischhauer, K. Köhler, Lüttgens, and Mather, all of whom he quotes at length in their various fields.

The author seems to have partially recovered from the healthy fear of dogmatizing in the matter of ambiguous forms, which he felt three years ago. Thus, he says (p. 52, foot): 'The preterit has the force of the first conditional only in the subjunctive, although the

form sometimes appears to be that of the indicative.' There follow forms like *wæron*, *gedyde*, *hæfde*, together with others clearly subjunctive. On p. 60, 1, he says, 'In two passages a preterit indicative seems to represent the conditional.' In the first of these passages the verb is *mehton*. This seems both arbitrary and inconsistent. Similarly (pp. 46 D, and 52 b), he gives long lists of preterits used as pluperfects, with only in rare instances sufficient context to enable one to form any judgment in the matter; frequently only a single clause is given.

Thus much for general considerations. I subjoin a few points of detail, noted in passing.

P. 2, § 376. Taught by his colossal experience in the matter of transitive verbs followed by the accusative (to which he devoted one hundred and seventeen pages of his first part), Wülfing gives no list of intransitive verbs: 'das gehört . . . mehr ins Gebiet des Wörterbuches' (!).

P. 25, l. 8. *Bo.* 360, 2, *hwæðer ðu nu ongit hwider þios spræce wille* is cited as an example of *willan* as a verb of independent signification ('Begriffszeitwort'); p. 31, l. 11, in *Cp.* 387, 14, *ðæt hie forgieten, hwider hie scylen, scylen* is regarded as an auxiliary, with ellipsis of the infinitive of a verb of motion. There is a manifest inconsistency here.

P. 31, l. 15 from foot. In *Bo.* 80, 29, *þæs leodhatan gewuna wæs þæt he wolde ælcne cuman swiþe arlice underfon, þonne he him ærest to com . . .*; *ac eft ær he him from cerde, he sceolde beon ofslegen*, Wülfing says that *wolde* and *sceolde* have the same meaning (= 'pflegen'); while both may possibly, considered apart, be thus translated, an experiment will immediately prove that they are not interchangeable.

P. 40, § 399. Wülfing aptly quotes Schmidt, to the effect that a Latin deponent often induced the periphrastic form, with present participle, in Old English. A similar observation may be made regarding the effect of the Latin periphrastic future, as exemplified in § 400, p. 42.

P. 42, § 401. *Dælneomende* is probably already a noun, corresponding to *participes* (although cf. Lat. *participo*).

P. 46, § 408, 1. Under *wesan*, all the examples are from the root of *beon*. Similarly, on p. 55, § 412, 2, under *beon*, all the examples are from the root of *eom*, p. 51, l. 12. The example from Wulfstan, *þe leofað and rixað a butan ende*, is of interest, as being on the

border-line between the present and the future signification for the verbs, which may perhaps better be said here to combine the two meanings. It is certainly not a safe case to cite as a present used for the future.

P. 51, § 411. Why does not Wülfig give, as in the preceding section, examples of the preterit *als solches*?

P. 71f, § 422. Wülfig says that all these independent questions with the subjunctive have a note of indefiniteness ('unbestimmte'); which is denoted in German by 'wohl'; this determines the mode. The questions in this section seem to me rather to fall into two quite widely differing classes: those introduced by *hwæðer*, and those where another interrogative word is employed. *Hwæðer* corresponds to two uses of 'wohl': (1) the ironical (= Lat. *num*); e.g. *Bo.* 134, 1, *hwæper þæt nu sie to talianne waclic and unnytt þætte nytwyrþost is eallra ðissa worulþinga, þæt is anweald?* (2) as denoting that the sentence states the speaker's opinion (= Lat. *nonne*); e.g. *Bo.* 78, 15, *eala hwæper ge netelican men ongiton, hwelc se wela sie?* The subjunctive is used in both forms of *hwæðer*-question, on account of the 'subjective' element which is present. In each case the question merely states a supposition or hypothesis, which is thrown into the interrogative form for the sake of making its expression as weak as possible. The questions introduced by some other word than *hwæðer* also fall into two classes: (1) Those which are derisive (similar to the first class of *hwæðer*-questions), as *Bo.* 74, 12, *eala hwæt se forma gitsere wære, þe ærest þa eorþan ongan delfan æfter golde?* These are merely rhetorical questions, not asked for information, or regarded from the standpoint of fact. (2) Those which expect a negative answer, as *Ps.* 43, 22, *hu ne wræce hit þonne God?* which is stated in a form (here negative; and expecting a positive answer) contrary to fact, and so unreal.

P. 76, l. 7. For *þæ*, read *þa*.

P. 77, Anm. 1. Here, as elsewhere, Wülfig refers to the headings in *Bede* and *Cura Pastoralis* as presenting certain peculiarities; I would respectfully suggest these headings as a subject of investigation to some inquiring spirit. In this connection, I would like to call attention to the similitudes of the *Cura Pastoralis*, whose name is Legion, and a few of whose characteristics may be seen in § 456, p. 146; I know of no more interesting or promising field of study, cultural as well as linguistic, than is presented by these similitudes.

P. 88, § 426, *cweðan*. After this verb, which usually (cf. § 427) takes the subjunctive in an object-clause, something more than mere assertion is required to prove that *seglode* is indicative.

P. 104, *Or.* 2, 6. I believe *þe hie* to form a relative pronoun. The only case of *ðe* = 'when' with which I am acquainted — and even this I propose with much diffidence, — occurs in a late text (Homily on John xiii. 1-30, in the *Bibl. der Ags. Prosa*, Vol. III., p. 156, l. 114): *Geearnode he þy syððan, þe he drihten heora ealra modgeðances cunnode, and be him sylfum hi ealle befran, hwæt hi wendon þæt he wære.*

P. 110, § 435. Wūlfing finds only two cases of this construction — 'as soon as' clauses with subjunctive — in Alfred. In a treatise on Temporal Constructions in Old English Prose, which I expect to publish within a year, I hope to present a goodly number of such instances from other texts; in the meantime I offer from Alfred, *Or.* 116, 27, *Bede* (Miller), 190, 15, and (with *meahton*, an ambiguous form) 248, 25.

P. 110, foot-note. May I suggest the possibility that Dr. Wūlfing has misunderstood Förster's *allein* (= only) ?

P. 119, l. 9 from foot. For *Or.* 120, 12, read *Cp.* 120, 12.

P. 145, § 454. In *Be.* 494, 42, for *and nu*, Miller gives *ono nu*. It is unnecessary to note and to lament that Wūlfing follows, in his selections from *Bede*, the readings of Smith, instead of the later and presumably more correct ones of Miller.

P. 151, Anm. May not the first part of *Bo.* 178, 8, introduced by *hwæðer*, be a rhetorical question of the sort discussed above under § 422, p. 71 ? This would leave *ðeah* to express the concession.

P. 177 ff., §§ 480-481 should be consolidated; the dependence of the infinitive is under consideration; the question of whether itself has or has not an object (*i.e.* whether it is the infinitive of a transitive or intransitive verb) is out of place here.

P. 238, ll. 12 ff. Wūlfing adds to his list of *verbal* substantives in *-ing*: 'Von anderen Ableitungen auf *-ing* sind mir folgende aufgefallen: *dirling*, *ierming*.' These seem quite out of place here; if a list of other derivatives were to be given, it should be much more complete.

FRANK H. CHASE.